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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: CROSS-STRAIT RELATIONS

Summary: News coverage of Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies October 23 focused on issues related to the upcoming legislative and presidential elections in Taiwan, including economic matters, plus the government-supported torch relay for the UN bid and the KMT's cycling tour for UN readmission as the Republic of China. Both activities started October 23 and will go around the island. In terms of editorials and commentaries, an editorial of the centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" said a new era of cross-strait relations may be coming, as both Taiwan and China see new leadership. The pro-independence English-language "Taiwan News" urged in an editorial that the ruling DPP learn more about China. End summary.

A) "More Humanity, Less Confrontation"

The centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" [circulation: 400,000] editorialized (10/24):

"In particular, Hu Jintao devoted a significant part of his political report to a discussion on culture, mentioning terms such as 'soft cultural power,' 'cultural productivity,' 'dynamic cultural creativity,' and 'cultural industry clusters,' which are different from those used by his predecessors. All these indicate that in the future, Chinese Communist authorities will resort to new thinking and practices to resolve the problems caused by imbalanced [economic] developments, in addition to rejuvenating the leadership. It is expected that this new set of strategies for governing the nation will also be applied to cross-strait relations. This is what it means to say 'harmony' for internal affairs, 'peace' for the outside world, and 'reconciliation' for the two sides across the Strait.

"The 17th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party has ended. Both sides of the Strait are about to welcome a new era. As the new generation of Chinese Communist leaders are presented to the world together, we hope that the 'putting people first' theory will also become the core of the Chinese Communists' Taiwan policy. More humanity and less confrontation; then we are able to find the greatest common factor for cross-strait reconciliation. Similarly, besides the need to learn the backgrounds, beliefs, and styles of the new Chinese leadership, the Taiwan side also must take hold of the leadership's framework of thinking in the years to come. After all, whichever political party becomes the ruling party in 2008, it has to be prepared to deal with this new leadership group. Let us wait and see if there will be a new kind of 'cross-strait relations' by that time!"

B) "Taiwan Must Learn to Cope with PRC"

The pro-independence English-language "Taiwan News" [circulation: 20,000] editorialized (10/24):

"... Although Hu's use of the vocabulary of 'peace' has been welcomed by many elements in international society, Beijing has yet

to take any action to slow, much less reduce, its deployment of ballistic missiles (now nearly 1,000) aimed at Taiwan or to revoke its belligerent March 2005 "anti-secession law" that explicitly threatens the use of "non-peaceful measures" against Taiwan if the latter refuses to accept unification.

"Hence, we believe Washington's positive evaluation given to Hu's gesture is seriously divorced from reality.

"... Such hasty, naive and unrealistic comments by high-ranking US officials on the empty words of PRC leaders such as Hu Jintao will further mislead the international media and consolidate Beijing's manufactured and misleading image as a 'peacemaker.'

"It seems that positive rhetoric, instead of complex and perhaps unpleasant realities, are more in accordance with the preferences of the current US policy-makers, who seem incapable of understanding the mentality of the current generation of PRC leadership that was shaped by the troubled decade of the so-called 'Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution' from 1966 to 1976. In this respect, the DPP leadership itself needs to be more diligent in understanding the background and mentality of the current and future CCP leadership if they ever hope to match wits with them.

"... The combination of PRC deception, US naivete and the KMT's blindness has naturally added to the difficulty faced by the DPP-led government in defending Taiwan's sovereignty and democracy.

"Hence, it is vitally important for the DPP government and party to sweep away the remaining shreds of the decades-long policy of ignorance imposed by the KMT martial law regime on the history of the Chinese Revolution against the KMT on the mainland and the nature of PRC society and the condition of the 1.3 billion Chinese people.

"Only with deeper inquiry into the nature of the PRC regime, the

Chinese economy and the conditions and desires of ordinary Chinese people will Taiwan's own policy-makers be prepared to cope with Hu and the rising heavyweights in the CCP and make accurate judgments of the direction of evolution of Chinese society."

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